

California Polytechnic State University

DATE: May 4, 2004

TO: Cal Poly Employees

FROM: Bob Detweiler, Interim Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs
Larry Kelley, Vice President for Administration and Finance

RE: Update

From time to time we hear concerns expressed about decisions that have been made and are being implemented. One such concern we heard recently is related to the decision to implement the PeopleSoft Student Administration software at Cal Poly.

Here are ten facts that led to Cal Poly's decision to move forward with the implementation of the Student Administration system now:

1. THE DECISION TO SELECT PEOPLESOFT WAS MADE IN 1998.

Cal Poly played an active role in evaluating the software packages and supported the recommendation that the entire CSU system acquire PeopleSoft for what became the Common Management System (CMS). Other software reviewed included systems from Oracle and Systems and Computer Technology (SCT). The PeopleSoft software purchased included the Finance system, the Human Resources system, and the Student Administration system—three fully integrated systems that compliment each other and are to be common to the twenty-three CSU campuses.

2. CAL POLY HAS LED THE WAY IN IMPLEMENTING THE PEOPLESOFT SYSTEMS

Cal Poly took a lead position in implementing the Finance and Human Resources systems and has been operating successfully with these systems since 2001.

3. CAL POLY CHOSE TO DEFER IMPLEMENTING THE STUDENT ADMINISTRATION SYSTEM UNTIL NOW

The Student Administration system was brand new in 1998. Cal Poly chose to defer the implementation of this system until the product was developed and tested more fully.

4. CAL POLY'S CURRENT STUDENT ADMINISTRATION SYSTEM NEEDS TO BE REPLACED

Cal Poly's current Student Administration system (called SCT Plus) has been in place for more than ten years, is a mainframe system, and has had more than 10,000 modifications to provide the needed functionality. The SCT Plus system was designed originally by Westinghouse, later acquired by Information

Associates, and then by SCT. Recently SCT was acquired by Sungard. In terms of technology, the SCT Plus system is old and the support of it by SCT has decreased and is likely to end in the next few years.

5. CAL POLY'S CURRENT MAINFRAME IS OUTDATED

In addition to the concern about the aging software system, the mainframe on which it operates will be supported by the vendor only until February, 2007. Both the operating system and the hardware itself will no longer be supported beyond that time and, at this time, there are no other clear needs identified for a mainframe operation on campus.

6. TOUGH DECISION IN A DIFFICULT TIME

Cal Poly, and higher education throughout the State of California, is in the midst of severe budget reductions. One could choose to simply hunker down and hope all bad things will pass. Cal Poly, on the other hand, continues to move forward recognizing that the students, faculty, and staff deserve a system that supports admission, registration, student financial aid, advising, and student accounts and will do so in a reliable manner for the future.

7. THE PEOPLESOFT STUDENT ADMINISTRATION SYSTEM IS WORKING ON OTHER CAMPUSES

Seven CSU campuses have already implemented the PeopleSoft Student Administration software. All the CSU campuses, including those currently using the SCT Banner software, are required to change to the PeopleSoft system.

8. THE IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE ALLOWS CAL POLY TO RECEIVE ADDITIONAL SUPPORT FROM THE CHANCELLOR'S OFFICE

By choosing to go live with the Student Administration system in 2006, Cal Poly has an opportunity to receive additional support from the Chancellor's Office on the project.

9. FINANCING PLAN WILL NOT HIT CURRENT BUDGETS

Cal Poly proposed, and the Chancellor's Office accepted, an idea to allow the implementation to move forward without drawing on our depressed operating budget for at least three years. At the end of the three-year period, the system will be live and Cal Poly will have up to five years to pay for the implementation. This approach allows us to advantage Cal Poly students, faculty, and staff in very difficult budget times without drawing on the current budget.

10. ACTING NOW ALLOWS MONEY TO BE USED PRODUCTIVELY

If the implementation were deferred, the need would be even greater and the cost would increase as we would be spending money to patch together aging software and hardware while still needing to replace it.

In summary, the decision to acquire PeopleSoft was a decision made for the entire CSU system more than six years ago. The reason to act now on the implementation for the Student Administration system is that the product has been proven to work, we can do so without a draw on our budget, and acting now will provide additional support from the Chancellor's Office.

Finally, there is the issue of the \$14.3 million estimate to implement the system. This cost will be paid over an eight-year period. We know that the cost to implement the system at CSU-Long Beach was about \$11 million, so the early estimate for Cal Poly seems responsible. We also know that the Cal Poly

estimate was given as a place holder to allow the Chancellor's Office to respond to a question in a recent state audit.

We currently are reviewing the PeopleSoft system, comparing it to the functionality of our current Student Administration system, and working to reduce the cost estimate as much as realistically possible. We believe at the completion of that review (which is scheduled to end June 30), the estimate will be reduced significantly.

At \$14.3 million, or even a number half that size, we are looking at one of the high costs of operating a university. This is a reality that we all would like to change, one that is managed daily as we weigh the needs of the campus and the alternatives to meet those needs, and one that we must accept as the cost serves the campus and supports the mission.

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